



## Gifford Medical Center

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July 28, 2015

Donna Jerry  
Green Mountain Care Board  
89 Main Street  
Montpelier, VT 05620

Dear Ms. Jerry,

Thank you for taking my call earlier in the week regarding the proposal to provide additional surgery services at Gifford Medical Center. We are excited to be able to offer this needed service within our community and look forward to working with the Green Mountain Care Board to assist us toward this goal.

Upper Valley Neurology and Neurosurgery (UVNN) is based out of Lebanon, New Hampshire. They provide services at Alice Peck Day and New London hospitals. They have been providing neurology services since 1994, adding neurosurgery services in 1998. Their practice has grown to include five physicians and two physician assistants. The reputation of this group is laudable and the Gifford clinicians have been referring patients to them for years with positive outcomes.

UVNN reached out to Gifford almost a year ago to discuss the potential of bringing their expertise and services to our hospital. We already have a strong working relationship with the group, and refer a number of Vermonters from our service area to them for care. This opportunity would keep these services local, ones that are currently being provided at another small Critical Access Hospital (CAH); Alice Peck Day in Lebanon. UVNN is a progressive organization that has high quality, efficiency, and a focus on only these limited services. This request to come to Gifford follows a similar outreach that they have done at New London Hospital (another CAH in New Hampshire) with great success.

Gifford refers roughly 120 patients to UVNN annually. While Gifford has a neurologist on staff and performs orthopaedic and other bone related surgeries on-site, we do not currently provide any neurosurgery services. Our patients are referred out for these

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services, and many of them receive their care in New Hampshire. Gifford has 3 operating rooms and an endoscopy room, and we would be able to accommodate these additional surgeries without renovating the OR area. Additional trays of instrumentation may be needed; however these may be obtained on consignment. There is also the potential we would need to add a microscope, and our plan would be to lease this item for some time period to ensure this new service is being productive before adding any capital expenditure. None of these expenditures would be considered significant and outside of our normal use of resources.

The types of cases performed at Gifford would be outpatient, minimally invasive surgery such as laminectomies, decompressions, minor fusions and clinic visits. In almost all cases, patients would go home the same day as the surgery, understanding there may be times a patient would stay overnight for pain control or for observation. Gifford has a strong Hospitalist Service which would be able to provide this care.

Gifford would bill services for all patient care activities performed. We are anticipating a half day a week of OR time and a half day a week of clinic time, assuming we would build to full days of each service in time. We would contract a UVNN physician and physician assistant to provide services at Gifford, supported by the administrative and nursing teams that already exist. We anticipate Gifford's cost for 18 OR cases to be roughly \$70,000.

We are excited about the opportunity to have Gifford's patients stay close to home for services that are inherently stressful and are able to be provided locally. We have a strong referral relationship with UVNN that spans a number of years with great clinical outcomes; however the referral causes our patients to have to travel out of state in order to receive these services. Being able to keep these services in Vermont, provided by a reputable group of surgeons would be ideal.

Thank you for your consideration of our proposal. Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Rebecca O'Berry  
Vice President, Operations and Surgical Divisions

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